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UXTANĒS OF SEBASTEIA AND BYZANTINE-ARMENIAN RELATIONS IN THE TENTH CENTURY*

by

Kosuke Nakada

Department of Mediaeval History
School of History, University of St Andrews

Introduction

The tenth century is often regarded as one of the turning points in Byzantine history, especially with respect to its eastern frontier. As a result of the eastward movement of imperial authority, the political landscape of eastern Asia Minor changed significantly.[1] Many scholarly efforts have been made to clarify the process and background of what changed and what did not, and recent studies have demonstrated that the empire used flexible methods in the course of its expansion, preserving, at least partly, the existing local structure of society and its administrative system.[2]

However, as for Armenia, which was largely affected first by the intervention and then the annexation by the imperial government, it seems that the local situation of those who came under Byzantine rule has not been studied in detail. Factors such as the various activities undertaken by local Armenians, their views of Byzantium, and their reactions to imperial authority, have not been fully considered.[3] Sources in Armenian and

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[1] Jonathan Shepard, "Equilibrium to Expansion (886–1025)", *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire, c. 500–1492,* ed. J. Shepard (Cambridge 2008), pp. 493–536; Mark Whittow, *The Making of Orthodox Byzantium, 600–1025* (Basingstoke 1996), pp. 310–357.

[2] Jonathan Shepard, "Constantine VII, Caucasian Openings and the Road to Aleppo", *Eastern Approaches to Byzantium*, ed. Antony Eastmond (Aldershot 2001), p. 24; Catherine Holmes, *Basil II and the Governance of Empire (976–1025)* (Oxford and New York 2005), pp. 299–391; Eadem, "'How the East Was Won' in the Reign of Basil II", in *Eastern Approaches to Byzantium,* pp. 41–56; Eadem, "Treaties between Byzantium and Islamic World", in *War and Peace in Ancient and Medieval History,* ed. Philip de Souza (Cambridge 2008), pp. 141–157.

[3] Of course, they were multiple, and this condition, at least partly seems to have formed the grounds of the flexibility of the Byzantine practice.

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other non-Greek languages attest local attitudes towards Byzantium, and some preliminary research has already been conducted into major Armenian historiographical works.[4] These studies, however, are mainly focused on Armenian perspectives on major contemporary historical events, such as warfare with the Arabs and annexation of the Caucasian principalities by Byzantium. Thus, the more nuanced picture of local circumstances and responses remains to be investigated. Moreover, it should be stressed that this expansion influenced not only those Armenians living in newly-annexed districts in "Armenia", but also those already settled in eastern Anatolia, including some parts of the existing imperial territory, as a result of the re-arrangement of military and religious institutions and the movement of peoples, a new trend, including the influx of an additional population of Armenians. Much less attention has been paid so far to the local experience within such "inner frontiers" of Byzantium, in comparison to the Cilician-Syrian and Transcaucasian frontiers.

An Armenian composition assembled the late tenth century serves as a useful starting point for studying the experience of Armenians who lived in or had moved to Sebasteia, a region which had long been incorporated into the structures and institutions of the Byzantine empire. This paper will focus on *Patmut'iwn Hayoc'* or *The History of the Armenians,* compiled by Uxtanēs of Sebasteia, an Armenian bishop who lived under Byzantine rule.[5] He was a pupil of Anania Narekac'i, the founder of the Narek Monastery in Vaspurakan. Uxtanēs' *History* was also compiled at Narekac'i's request in the 980s,[6] most likely when he was in the city of Sebasteia.[7]

[4] E.g. Viada Arutjunova-Fidanyan, "L'image de l'Empire byzantin dans l'historiographie arménienne médievale (X^{e}-XI^{e} s.)", *L'Arménie et Byzance. Histoire et Culture* (Paris 1996), pp. 7–17. Among the major Armenian sources, however, several detailed studies on each author's historiography have recently been published. Tara. L. Andrews, *Matt'eos Uṙhaec'i and his Chronicle: History as Apocalypse in Crossroads of Cultures* (Leiden and Boston 2017), esp. pp. 74–100; Tim Greenwood, "'Imagined Past, Revealed Present': A Reassessment of Պատմութիւն Տարօնոյ [*History of Taron*]", *Travaux et Mémoires* 18 (2014), pp. 377–392; Idem, *The Universal History by Step'anos Taronec'i: Introduction, Translation and Commentary* (Oxford 2017).

[5] Uxtanēs, *Patmut'iwn Hayoc'*, ed. and intro. Petros Hovannisyan and Georg Madoyan, *Matenagirk' Hayoc'* vol. 15-2 (Antelias 2012), pp. 446–616; French translation of book I and book II by Marie-Félicité Brosset, *Deux Historiens Arméniens. Kiracos de Gantzac, XIII^{e} s., Histoire d'Arménie, Oukhtanès d'Ourha, X^{e} s., Histoire en Trois Parties* (St. Pétersbourg 1870), pp. 206–351; English translation by Zaven Arzoumanian, *Bishop Ukhtanes of Sebastia History of Armenia* (Fort Lauderdale 1985–1988).

[6] The precise dating is unclear, but he seems to have completed the work sometime between 980 and 989/90. See Greenwood, *The Universal History,* p. 23 and the introduction in *Matenagirk' Hayoc'* by T'amrazyan.

[7] Uxtanēs, *Patmut'iwn Hayoc'*, I. 1. The proem, which for some reason is not included in the translation by Brosset, takes the form of a letter of reply to Anania. On the identification of

By analysing Uxtanēs' work, this paper will examine the view of a contemporary Armenian living under the Byzantine regime on the mutual relationship between the imperial authority and the Armenians in an age of political and social upheaval, and its place within the broader historical context. As will be discussed in detail below, Uxtanēs adopted a strongly conservative position which can generally be regarded as hostile to Byzantine authority. However his work enables us to observe the changes that occurred in local society during the Byzantine expansion, even in a region such as Sebasteia which had long been under Byzantine control. It gives insight into the experience of local Armenians under Byzantine rule.

The Composition of *The History of the Armenians*

According to its preface, *The History of the Armenians* originally consisted of three parts, the third part of which is now unfortunately lost.[8] In the first part, titled "On Our Kings and Patriarchs," 76 chapters (in the *Matenagirk'*s version) recount the history from Adam to the reign of King Trdat (r. 283–330) and the conversion of Armenia. Most of the contents are cited word for word from the fifth-century *History* by Movsēs Xorenac'i, but the history of the Armenians is also interestingly combined with the history of the Roman emperors from Caesar to Constantine I, taken from a work called *Anonymous Chronicle*, again almost verbatim.[9] Meanwhile, the second part, comprising of 70 chapters, is titled "the separation of the Georgians [from Armenians]" and largely utilises the letters on this topic from the seventh century, preserved in *Girk' T'łt'oc',* or *The Book of Letters*. The lost third part was a contemporary account of the people called *Cad* or *Cayt'*, i.e. the (re-)baptized Chalcedonian Armenians.[10]

Uxtanēs, see Souren E. Kolanjian, "Ukhtanes the Historian: Bishop of Edessa or of Sebastia?", *Armenian Sebasteia/Sivas and Lesser Armenia*, ed. Richard G. Hovannisian (Costa Mesa CA, 2004), pp. 137–152. Although Uxtanēs is sometimes called "the bishop of Edessa (Urfa)," he mentions Sebasteia as "our diocese/flock" at the point of writing. Thus, most scholars now agree that Uxtanēs was the bishop of Sebasteia when he composed the *History*.

[8] The title given in the manuscript is "The history in three volumes, related by the lord Uxtanēs of Se[basteia], at the request of father Anania, founder and first ranked *vardapet* of Narek monastery (Զպատմութիւն յերիս հատուածս զոր ասացեալ է տեառն Ուխտանիսի Սե[բաստիոյ] եպիսկոպոսի, ի խնդրոյ հաւրն Անանիայի՝ Նարեկավանից առաջնորդի եւ նախաշար վարդապետի)." Uxtanēs, I. 1.

[9] Brosset, *Deux Historiens*, x; Greenwood, *The Universal History*, p. 26–27. On *Anonymous Chronicle,* see Idem, '"New Lights from the East': Chronography and Ecclesiastical History through a Late Seventh-Century Armenian Source", *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 16/2 (2008), pp. 197–254.

[10] For *Cad*, see Viada Arutjunova-Fidanyan, "The Ethno-Confessional Self-Awareness of Armenian Chalcedonians", *Revue des études arméniennes* 21 (1988–1989), pp. 354–357;

Of the extant parts of the work, to date most attention has been paid to book two, due to its presentation of Caucasian Christianity; little research has been done on book one. It is usually regarded as the mere reuse of past works, showing nothing new about late antiquity.[11] However, recently Tim Greenwood has argued that even part one has its own value in relation to the history of the tenth century, as it reflects the historiographical contexts of that period. Concerning Byzantine-Armenian relations, he notes that Uxtanēs' selection of topics is evidence of his hostility towards the Romans, which should also be interpreted as signifying his antagonism against its contemporary successors, the "Romans" of his own day.[12] This point is persuasive, as supporting evidence for his argument that the "creative" reuse of the past was a trend in tenth-century Armenian historiography can be observed in other works such as Pseudo-Yovhan Mamikonean, Pseudo-Šapuh Bagratuni, and Stephen of Taron.[13]

Nevertheless, there are several aspects of Uxtanēs' historiography that have yet to be considered. In my view, the contemporary elements that Uxtanēs projected within book one of his *History* are not limited to his hostility towards contemporary Romans of Byzantium; the activities of the local Armenians and the situation in their society during the changes in political order in eastern Anatolia also seem to be closely connected to his writing. Uxtanēs' manner of excerption from existing materials, especially from the *History* of Xorenac'i, and moreover, the occasional modifications he made, allows us to trace something of the contemporary circumstances.

Thus, when placed in the context of the tenth century, it seems that there is still much to explore in book one of the *History* of Uxtanēs. The same can be said for book two. Although I will focus one book one in this paper, as it is less studied and more suitable for exploring our topic, Uxtanēs' view on the Byzantine-Armenian relations, it may be useful to spare few words for book two as well. For instance, two letters at the

Nina G. Garsoian, "The Problem of Armenian Integration into the Byzantine Empire", *Studies on the Internal Diaspora of the Byzantine Empire,* ed. Hélène Ahrweiler and Angeliki E. Laiou (Washington D.C. 1998), esp. pp. 104–109; Jean-Pierre Mahé, "L'Église arménienne de 611 à 1066", *Histoire du christianisme des origines à nos jours*, ed. Gilbert Dagron, Pierre Riché and André Vauchez (Paris 1993), p. 501.

[11] The only exception is in chapter 75, where *the History* of Šapuh Bagratuni, one of the contemporary Armenian historiographical works, is cited, see Greenwood, *The Universal History,* p. 26.

[12] Greenwood, *The Universal History,* pp. 26–32. For the continuous usage of the term "Rome" in Armenian historiography, see Arutjunova-Fidanjan, "L'image de l'Empire byzantin", p. 9.

[13] Greenwood, "'Imagined Past", pp. 377–392. See also the introduction in Idem, *The Universal History*.

beginning of part two, which are not recorded in the *Book of Letters* and, according to Uxtanēs, translated from the Georgian documents found in Tbilisi, are noteworthy. These two letters are correspondence between Movsēs the kat'ołikos of Armenians and the Georgian primate Kiwrion, at whose time the two churches are said to have been separated. Nina Garsoian, Jean-Pierre Mahé and Nikoloz Alexidze who recently examined the work in the course of the research on the rupture between Armenians and Georgians in the seventh century, do not doubt the authenticity of the two letters, although Garsoian points out the possibility of modification by Uxtanēs. However, Tim Greenwood suspects that they were devised by Uxtanēs, judging from where they were placed in the work — right at the beginning — and the tone of the contents, which are not consistent with the rest of the letters. Indeed, unlike the other letters dealing with Georgian matters, they are aggressively hostile towards the Romans.[14] Furthermore, the first parts of these two letters are quite similar to the correspondence between Abraham the kat'ołikos of Armenians and Kiwrion, in which the previous correspondence between Movsēs and Kiwron is mentioned. Uxtanēs also states that he noticed the existence of the first two letters through the reference in the Abraham's correspondence, and thus it is also possible that he fabricated the letters, using the later correspondence of Abraham as a model.[15]

The are also other noticeable changes and insertions elsewhere in book two, but they should be treated in a separate publication. Let us return to book one for now. To demonstrate what Uxtanēs tried to project in his work, we shall first review the situation in western Armenia, including Sebasteia, at around Uxtanēs' own time, in order to define those features of his current situation which he wished to convey.

The Context of Composition: Sebasteia in the Late Tenth Century

Sebasteia, the metropolitan city in north-eastern Cappadocia, is well known for its Forty Martyrs and had always been an ecclesiastical centre

[14] Uxtanēs, II. 2–3; See Nina G. Garsoian, *L'Église arménienne et le grand schisme d'Orient* (Louvain 1999), pp. 310–313; Jean-Pierre Mahé, "La rupture arméno-géorgienne au début de VII^{e} siècle et les réécritures historiographiques des IX^{e}-X^{e} siècles", *Il Caucaso: Cerniera fra culture dal Mediterraneo alla Persia (Secoli IV–VII). Settimane di studio del Centro Italiano di studi sull' alto medioevo* XLIII (Spoleto 1996), pp. 927–961, esp. p. 939; Greenwood, *Universal History,* p. 24; Nikoloz Alexidze, *The Narrative of the Caucasian Schism: Memory and Forgetting in Medieval Caucasia* (Louvain 2018), pp. 104-105, n. 1.

[15] *Girk' T'łt'oc'* I, pp. 164–167; Uxtanēs, II. 24.

from late antiquity to the fall of the Byzantine empire. In the late Roman era, the city had been the centre of the province of Armenia both in terms of the civil administration and religious hierarchy.[16] By the ninth century, it had risen to the rank of eleventh in the ecclesiastical order according to *Notitia Episcopatum*, and then retained almost the same position until the fifteenth century.[17] With regard to the imperial administration, Sebasteia had initially been a part of the theme of Armeniakon, and was made independent *kleisoura* in the reign of Leo VI (r. 886–912), probably at some point before 908. It finally became a theme under the same emperor before 911, as the document on the composition of the expeditionary unit to Crete in his reign, preserved in *De Cerimoniis* compiled under Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (r. 944–959), records.[18] No explicit reason is given for the promotion to the status of theme, but its strategic position against the emir of Melitene whose border met with the theme, might be a possible context for this change. Indeed, Melitene played an active role in the incursions into Byzantine territory from the late ninth to the early tenth century, until subjugated by the imperial army led by John Kurkuas in 934. Perhaps in order to prepare for the attack from Melitene, the region geographically next to Sebasteia was also established as the *kleisoura* of Lykandos by Leo VI, with its command entrusted to the autonomous Armenian leaders including Melias, and then promoted to theme slightly

[16] It has been the metropole of Armenia I around 400, but later attached to Armenia II. Friedrich Hild and Marcell Restle, *Kappadokien,* Tabula Imperii Byzantini 2 (Vienna 1981), p. 274.

[17] *Notitiae Episcopatum Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae: texte, critique, introduction et notes*, ed. Jean Darrouzès (Paris 1981), notitiae 4–20. It is also noteworthy that several new church districts were created in western Armenia, including Taron, which was annexed by the imperial authority in 966/7.

[18] Sebasteia first appears as a theme in the document of Cretan expedition in 911 (*De Cerimoniis*, 652), whereas it had still been a *kleisoura* in a document on the salaries of military commanders (*De Cerimoniis*, 697), which is dated to somewhere between 908–911. It is not recorded in the so-called *Kletorologion* of Philoteos in 899. *De Cerimoniis,* 445, 652, 665-6, 697; Nicolas Oikonomidès, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IX^e^ et X^e^ siècles* (Paris 1972), pp. 247, 265, 349, 352; Idem, "L'organisation de la frontière orientale de Byzance aux X^e^-XI^e^ siècles et le *Taktikon* de l'Escorial", *Actes du XIV^e^ congrès international des études byzantines* (Bucarest 1974), p. 286; Hild and Restle, *Kappadokien,* p. 274; S. Peter Cowe, "Armenian Immigration to the Sebasteia Region, Tenth-Eleventh Centuries", *Armenian Sebasteia*, p. 116. Peter Cowe assumes that Sebasteia had come under the Byzantine rule only after the ninth century, during the Basil I's Paulician war, but it seems that the city had long been Byzantine territory; it appears as under the Byzantine control in the account of Arab incursion in the late seventh century, although it is possible that significant re-organisation was undertaken in the late ninth century, following the Basil's warfare. See Elias of Nisibis, p. 94; Hild and Restle, *Kappadokien*, pp. 274–275; *ODB*, s.v. Sebasteia (by Clive Foss).

later than Sebasteia, in 916, under the regency of Zoe.[19] In fact, there seems to have been close connections between Sebasteia and Lykandos. For instance, the *De Administrando Imperio*, again composed by Constantine VII, indicates that Larissa, which later became a part of the theme of Lykandos, had formerly been a *turma* belonging to the theme of Sebasteia.[20] Moreover, there is an early tenth-century lead seal of Konstantinos, being *Ostiarios* and *Krites* of both Lykandos and Sebasteia.[21] Thus, it is probable that the theme of Sebasteia was expected to play the role of preventing the incursion of Melitene, together with its neighbouring districts.

The above assessment attests to the presence of the imperial provincial administration and its re-organisation in Sebasteia at the start of the tenth century. At the same time, Sebasteia had already become a major centre of Armenian settlement. In the reign of Basil I (r. 867–886), as a result of the devastation during the war against the Paulicians and the removal of the existing population from there, many Armenians moved into this area.[22] According to the above-mentioned record on the Cretan expedition, the unit from the theme of Sebasteia consisted of a cavalry of 1,000 Armenian soldiers.[23] Sebasteia is usually not counted as an Armenian theme (*Armeniaka Themata* or small themes/*mikra themata*), i.e. frontier units distinguished from ordinary themes, making the specification of ethnicity in the military document noteworthy.[24] This implies that they might have been regarded as being alien to the region, either because they were new to the place or they had different appearance, language, or religious status.[25]

[19] *De Administrando Imperio*, ch. 50; Gerard Dédéyan, "Mleh le Grand, Stratège de Lykandos", *Revue des études arméniennes* 15 (1981), pp. 73–102; *PmbZ*, Melias #25041. For the Melias' role against Melitene, see Qudāma b. Ja'far, *Kitāb al-Kharāj,* ed. and trans. Michail. J. Goeje (Leiden 1889), 254. In the example in *De Administrando Imperio*, it is also notable that the proposal from the Armenians, rather than the initiative of the Byzantines led to the creation of the districts.

[20] *De Administrando Imperio*, ch. 50, 133-134. Hild and Restle, *Kappadokien*, p. 221.

[21] See *PmbZ*, Konstantinos #23853; George Zacos et al., eds, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, 2 vols (Basel 1972–1985), vol. 2, no. 803. In addition, there seems to have been other connections with adjacent regions heavily inhabited by the Armenians. As discussed below, the Armenian bishops of Larissa turned to the Byzantine side together with the bishop of Sebasteia. See p. 7 below.

[22] Cowe, "Immigration", p. 116.

[23] *De Cerimoniis*, 652. See also n. 18 above. There were also other Armenian units from Black sea region. *De Cerimoniis*, 655–656.

[24] For the list of Armenian/small themes, see Hans-Joachim Kühn, *Die Byzantinische Armee im 10. und 11. Jahrhundert: Studien zur Organisation der Tagmata* (Vienna 1991), pp. 61–65. See also Oikonomidès, *Les listes*, pp. 345–6.

[25] Although it is impossible to determine their confession, it is possible that some have been converted to Chalcedonian. The canon from the Council of Širakawan damns the Armenian converts for their gain, suggesting that they actually benefitted from this. See

According to Bar Hebraeus, another immigration movement occurred in the reign of Nicephorus II Phocas (r. 963–969).[26] Under such a circumstance, there might have been at least two "layers" or communities of Armenians; those who had newly arrived in the region, and those who had been established there for a longer time, although there may have been some further gradations among this second group. Subsequently, when Yovhannēs-Senekʻerim Arcruni, Armenian king of Vaspurakan offered his territory to the empire in 1021, he was put in charge of of Sebasteia along with several other regions, in return for his submission. This selection was presumably not by chance, but due to the presence of Armenian communities and the convenience for their governance might have been one of the considerations. According to the continuator of Tʻovma Arcruni, Yovhannēs-Senekʻerim migrated to Sebasteia with a considerable number of people. This might suggest that another layer of migration occurred then.[27]

At any rate, as a result of the influx of Armenians, Sebasteia experienced the development of Armenian social structures and communities; one of the symbolic events in this context was the establishment of Armenian bishopric, at least by 986, recorded in the well-known passage on the persecution of Armenians in Sebasteia in the *Universal History* of Stephen of Tarōn, to which I will return below.[28] Thus, while the presence of the Byzantine administration in Sebasteia and its re-organisation can be observed (although only a small number of officials and soldiers were sent from the imperial government), its importance for the Armenian communities could also have increased in the meantime. There was an overlap of Armenian and non-Armenian hierarchies and religious authorities, and perhaps also secular ones,[29] in the same region, as well as simultaneous

Krikor Maksoudian, "The Chalcedonian Issue and the Early Bagratids: The Council of Širakawan", *Revue études arméniennes* 21 (1988–9), pp. 333–344.

[26] Ernest A. T. Wallis Budge, trans. *The Chronography of Gregory Abu'l Faraj, the Son of Aaron, the Hebrew Physician Commonly Known as Bar Hebraeus Being the First Part of His Political History of the World* (London 1932), 187.

[27] Tʻovma Arcruni, IV. 12; Cowe, "Immigration," pp. 119–122

[28] Stepʻanos Tarōnecʻi, XX; Greenwood, *The Universal History*, pp. 251–252.

[29] An Armenian list of nobles, preserved in the *Life of Nersēs* composed in 967, attests to the presence of Armenian family of Sebasteankʻ. See Nicholas Adontz, *Armenia in the Period of Justinian: The Political Conditions Based on the Naxarar System,* trans. and rev. Nina G. Garsoian (Lisbon 1970), p. 201; Cowe, "Immigration", p. 117. Cf. Matʻevosyan, no. 73. Although the content of the list is dubious, it may reflect the contemporary situation that there was an Armenian noble house in Sebasteia under the Byzantine rule. Although Peter Cowe seems to refer to them in the context of the Armenians' own social structure along with the bishopric, which emerged as a result of the influx, it is also possible that local Armenian lords survived by developing connection with Byzantine

existence of different communities in the lower social strata. This situation seems to have given rise to social and religious tensions in Sebasteia, and culminated in the above-mentioned persecution of the Armenian cleric and religious community by the Byzantine metropolitan. The account of Stephen of Taron testifies to the detailed situation around the year 986, which is probably close to the time when the *History* of Uxtanēs was written. According to Stephen, Sebasteia contained an Armenian bishop and protopresbyter, and there was also an Armenian bishop of Larissa. This implies that there was also a hierarchical structure to the Armenian church set up in Sebasteia, together with adjacent regions, overlapping with the jurisdiction of the imperial church.[30] Such a situation naturally could not be ignored by the imperial authority and the Orthodox church. Thus Armenian people were reportedly oppressed by the Byzantine metropolitan because of their "faith (*hawat*/հաւատս)," and Armenian protopresbyter named Gabriel was put in jail where he later died. Subsequently the Armenian bishops of Sebasteia and Larissa decided to defect and turn to the Chalcedonian side. Stephen also mentions the presence of an Armenian population who retained their own faith and were prohibited to use their own call to prayer. They were later allowed "to be free in all religious practices" by Basil II (r. 976–1025) during his military campaign to the East around the year 1000.[31] This episode certainly signifies the pressure from the local imperial church towards the non-Chalcedonian community,[32] but it is also clear that the reactions of Armenians towards

rule, as was the case in the local potentates in the regions such as Lykandos, 1Mesopotamia); *De Thematibus*, ch. IX (Mesopitamia), XI (Lykandos).

[30] Stephen mentions that "bishops from the country of Armenia and the side of the Greeks" were in presence at a council after the appointment of catholicos Sargis in 992, and this is probably an implication of the Armenian religious community within the empire, including Sebasteia. Step'anos Tarōnec'i, XXXII; Greenwood, *The Universal History*, pp. 292–293; Idem, "Armenian Neighbours (600–1045)", *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire*, ed. Jonathan Shepard (Cambridge 2008), pp. 358–359.

[31] Step'anos Tarōnec'i, XX–XXI, XLIII; Greenwood, *The Universal History*, pp. 251–283, p. 308. Stephen also records the letter of catholicos Xačik I to the metropolitan of Sebasteia. As Greenwood notes, tension at a local level is also recorded in letters of Metropolitan of Melitene and Samuel of Kamrǰajor, preserved in *Girk' T'łt'oc'* I, pp. 302–22. See Greenwood, "Armenian Neighbours," p. 358.

[32] It is also possible that the discord between local Greeks and Armenians was a more general one. Matthew of Edessa relates the episode concerning the persecution of Armenians by Romanos IV Diogenes, who lend an ear to the slander from local Greeks from Sebasteia. Matt'ēos Uṙhayec'i, CIII. Although this account must be treated with caution, it is possible, as Garsoian points out, that the episode reflects "a memory of traditional confessional hostility in this city". See Garsoian, "The Problems of Armenian Integration," p. 82.

the imperial authority and church were not unanimous. There were those who sought to negotiate with or accept imperial authority or church, or were forced to do so, as well as those who denied and tried to retain their own position. Since the Armenian communities were not monolithic, this is unsurprising.

This is explicit in the case of clergies and religious communities in Sebasteia, but it is also possible that there were other types of relationship among the laity, as military personnel and local elites in the same city, considering what happened in the other regions. From the ninth to the eleventh centuries, there were also local Armenians, including members of the elite, who sought employment and preferment within imperial structures. It is well known that a number of Armenian potentates defected to the Byzantine empire in the course of its expansion to the east.[33] It is important to note that they were consisting of manifold layers, including not only highest princely houses such as Bagratids and Arcrunis, but also seemingly humble potentates such as Melias of Lykandos. As stated above, *De Cerimoniis* indicates that there was also the existence of Armenian contingents from Sebasteia in the imperial army. Considering the case of Lykandos adjacent to Sebasteia, where Armenian lords served as local commanders, it is not impossible that those from Sebasteia were also appointed as officers.[34] It is equally possible, however, that there were those who chose not to approach the empire in order to safeguard their own interests or as a result of internal political tensions among the Armenian nobles. One of the notable examples outside Sebasteia might be the tenth-century king Ašot II (r. 914–928), who opposed the empire although he benefited greatly from imperial support at first.[35] Naturally,

[33] Cowe, "Armenian Immigration", pp. 115–118. For the influx of Armenians in general, see Garsoian, "The Problem of Armenian Integration", pp. 53–124.

[34] See also n. 29 above. It is also known that Armenians often played the role of ἀπελάτης (brigandage), which served for raids, scouts and guidance in the frontier, for the sake of the imperial army. Dédéyan, "Mleh", p. 79; *ODB*, s.v. Apelatai (by Andrew J. Cappel). On this point, it is also remarkable that Leo VI recommends to rely on local potentates in military matters. See Leo VI, *Taktika*, IV. 3.

[35] Cf. Greenwood, "Armenian Neighbours", p. 354. There also seems to have been Armenian princes who decided to stand by the imperial side in his reign. Yovhannēs Drasxanakertc'i, LXIII provides an example of the desertion of one Armenian prince who finally served under John Kurkuas. Fractious position of Armenians between Byzantium and other powerful polities are mentioned elsewhere in the Byzantine texts, but this may be resulting from their possibilities of political choices. e.g. *De Administrando Imperio*, 43. 7–26. Cf. Garsoian, "The Problems of Armenian Integration", p. 63. In addition, although this is not a case for Armenian princes, a similar situation is attested in the description on the Qaysid emirs in Armenia in *De Administrando Imperio*, 44.

the diversity amongst Armenians in the city of Sebasteia must have also resulted in different patterns of response to the extension of imperial authority; they were by no means divided in a bipolar manner. Rather, there must have been a spectrum of attitudes towards Byzantine authority among the Armenians. It must be noted that Uxtanēs held office at a time of great volatility. He would have been aware of the complex political and religious realities in Sebasteia and its surroundings. Unsurprisingly this experience also informs his *History*.[36]

Roman Past and Byzantine Present in Uxtanēs' *History*

On this point, Greenwood has already noted that Uxtanēs' work includes his projection of contemporary Byzantine-Armenian relations, as I have mentioned earlier. He argues that Uxtanēs' topics are highly selective; Roman-Armenian affairs are included on a priority basis, and the Roman authorities are often depicted in a hostile manner.[37] This is understandable if we take into consideration that Uxtanēs was the disciple of Anania Narekac'i, a strong defender of anti-Chalcedonianism, and to whom his work was addressed.[38] However, if we look at the text closer, it becomes clear that he is also focusing on the activities of the Armenian rulers in relation to the Roman authorities, and that he made certain modifications to the original text of Xorenac'i for this purpose.[39] This is not limited to the deletion of words or phrases which did not suit his purposes. Uxtanēs also altered the narrative by making deliberate changes, thereby aligning the past more closely with the present situation viewed by himself. Let us observe some typical cases.

[36] Whether Uxtanēs completed the work after the event of 986/7 in Stephen of Taron must remain uncertain. However, judging from the letters cited in n. 31 above, the local tension between pro- and anti-Chalcedonianism itself might have been a general situation around that time, since the expansion of the Byzantine influence was simultaneous with the influx of the Armenians.

[37] Greenwood, *The Universal History*, pp. 26–32.

[38] Anania refuted Chalcedonianism in his work called *Hawatarmat* (*The Root of Faith*). It is clear from the proem of *the History* that Uxtanēs deeply respected his master and obediently responded to him. See Uxtanēs, I. 1; Greenwood, *The Universal History,* p. 23.

[39] One can of course argue that this was a natural consequence as Uxtenes cited the "Armenian" history of Xorenac'i. This might be partly true, but considering that he was trying to deal with the Calcedonian-Armenian relations in part II and III in the same work, it might be possible that his redaction is relevant to his attitude towards the Roman-Armenian, and therefore Byzantine-Armenian relations.

First of all, let us examine the reign of Aršam (1st century C.E.). Xorenac'i's and Uxtanēs' versions run respectively as follows:

> Xorenac'i, II 24: "But because in the same year Aršez died, leaving the throne of Persia to his son Aršavir, who was at that time a child and small, there was no one to help Aršam to resist the Romans. He parlayed with them for a peace treaty, giving tributes from Mesopotamia and Caesarea, through the hand of Herod. This was the beginning of a part of Armenia to be a tributary of the Romans".[40]

> Uxtanēs, I. 30: "And after him reigned Aršam, son of Artašes, ordered by Persian king Aršez. In his time, Armenia began to pay tribute to Romans".[41]

In Xorenac'i's fifth-century version, Aršam is depicted as a helpless figure. As the Persian king Aršavir was too young, he had no assistance and no other choice but to conclude a treaty with Rome and pay tributes extracted from Mesopotamia and Caesarea. A detailed account of the internal affairs of the Armenian kingdom follows. However, in Uxtanēs' version, it is only briefly noted that Armenia began to pay tribute to Rome; all sympathetic words for the king are omitted, and this is followed by a short account of internal affairs. Of course such kind of changes are subtle and must be treated with caution, as it is also possible that Uxtanēs has done so just for the purposes of abbreviation. However, judging from what he has chosen to include and not to do so, it is highly probable that he has intentionally edited in order to arrange the narrative in accordance with his view. Here Uxtanēs apparently tried to remove the impression that the submission was inevitable (see also table 1 below). This seems more likely when understood collectively with other changes.

Noticeable modifications can also be found in the chapter on King Eruand (again 1st century C.E.):

> Xorenac'i, II. 38: "But Eruand was undisturbed in the reign of Vespasian and Titus, supporting Romans and giving them Mesopotamia."[42]

[40] Xorenac'i, II. 24: "Բայց ևանգի ի նմին ամի վախճանեցաւ Արբէզ, թողլով զթագաւորութիւնն Պարսից որդւոյ իւրում Արշաւրի, մանկան փոքրկան յոյժ եւ տղայոյ՝ ոչ ոք էր որ օգնէր Արշամայ՝ ընդդէմ կալ Հռոմայեցւոց. Խօսի ընդ նոսա ի հաշտութիւն խաղաղութեան, տալով գիարկս ի Միջագետաց եւ ի կողմանց Կեսարու ի ձեռն Հերովդի: Այս եղեւ սկիզբն Հայոց մասնաւոր մտանել ընդ հարկաւ Հռոմայեցւոց..." Translation cited from *History of the Armenians*, trans. and commentary by R. W. Thomson, revised ed. (Ann Arbor 2006), unless otherwise specified.

[41] Uxtanēs, I. 30, 9-10: "Եւ թագաւորէ յետ նորա Արշամ՝ որդի Արտաշիսի՝ հրամանաւ Արբէզի Պարսից արքայից: Ա՛ռ սովաւ եղեւ սկիզբն Հայոց տալ մասնաւոր հարկ Հռովմայեցւոց."

[42] Xorenac'i, II. 38: "Բայց թիկունս առնելով Երուանդայ զՀռոմայեցիս՝ ոչ ինչ վտանգի ի թագաւորութեանն Վեսպասիանոս եւ Տիտոսի, թողլով ի նոսա զՄիջագետս.

> Uxtanēs, I. 41: "Eruand supported Vespasian and Titus, the Roman emperors, giving them Mesopotamia."[43]

As for the king's entire reign, Xorenac'i's version describes Eruand's virtue in youth, and the confusion in his latter life. He supplies a detailed account of Eruand's construction of cities, and his battle with young Artašes, his successor, during which he is in turn depicted in a negative way. In the *History* of Uxtanēs, most of the latter part is omitted. The massacre of the sons of his predecessor Sanatruk and the survival of Artašes, the concession of Mesopotamia, the construction of Eruandakert, and the related episode on the king's evil eyes are included, leaving a negative impression of Eruand's reign as a whole. With relation to Mesopotamia, Xorenac'i's justification for Eruand losing hold of Mesopotamia that 'he was undisturbed during the reigns of Vespasian and Titus' is deleted (See also table 2 below). This may be because Uxtanēs tried to remove with the favourable impression of Roman rule, while arranging the whole story as the reign of incompetent king who after all submitted to the imperial authority himself.

Concerning the reign of Tiran (r. 338–350), Uxtanēs elected to retain the account that he served the Romans faithfully, without recording any significant deeds, and that he enjoyed a life of hunting and relaxation, followed by his piteous death in a snowy winter. All other descriptions of internal affairs and the positive comment that 'he governed the kingdom peacefully' are deleted from Xorenac'i's version.[44] This might have been done with the purpose similar to that of Eruand's reign.

These editorial processes of omission or abbreviation of political history collectively suggest that Uxtanēs was trying to emphasise the deeds of Armenian kings with regard to their relationship with the Romans. This should be reconciled with the contemporary situation mentioned previously; there were also Armenians, both willing and unwilling, who were seeking to approach the Byzantine side. The tenth-century Byzantine treatises, such as *De Administrando Imperio* and *De Thematibus* record the concession of the estates in western Armenia by the local elites, including the case of contemporary Mesopotamia, the same region which Uxtanēs included in his work as a part to his *History*.[45] Thus, his inclusion of the case of Mesopotamia in the reign of Eruand might have worked as an

[43] Uxtanēs, I. 41, 8. "Եւ թիկունս արարեալ իւր Երուանդայ զՎեսպասիանոս եւ զՏիտոս զկայսերս Հռովմայեցւոց, բողու ի նոսա զմիջագետս:"

[44] Xorenac'i, II. 62; Uxtanēs, I. 44. See also table 3.

[45] See n. 29 above.

allusion, as the name could remind the contemporary readers of the recent case of the theme with the same name, although it is referred by its Armenian name. In Sebasteia, there were Armenians who served in the imperial army, and some of them might have been locals. Regarding the clergy, even high-ranking clerics such as the bishops of Sebasteia and Larissa switched sides to Chalcedonians. In this environment, it is highly probable that Uxtanēs decided to stress the past Armenian submission to imperial authorities — often in a negative context — in response to the contemporary situation.

While the above changes are subtle deletions and choice of the contents, for which cautious interpretation is required, there are also more obvious changes he made to the original texts. For example, as Greenwood has already pointed out, he adds the information that Caesarea in Cappadocia is the region inhabited by the "Byzantines (Biwzandacʻik'/Բիւզանդացիք)" in the passage on the expedition of the king Aram, presumably as an implication for the then-present situation, while Xorenacʻi's version refers simply to the site, the region of Cappadocia and the place called Caesarea.[46] Furthermore, probably one of the most significant modifications for Uxtanēs' purpose can be found in the description of the expedition of King Xosrow (r. 279–293), in which he seems to have offered his thoughts about what Armenian kings should be like, by this tiny alteration:

> Uxtanēs, I. 46, 6: "And his son Xosrow took the throne, in the third year of the Persian king Artavan. Immediately he gathered the force of the Armenians and went across the Great Mountains, in order to exact vengeance for his father's death. Defeating the nations with sword and lance, he took hostage and returned. As a token of his authority, he set up a stele with a Hellenic writing, so that it is clear that they are subjugated by the Armenians."[47]

The difference is only in the last part; Xorenacʻi states that "he [Xosrow] set up a stele with Hellenic writing, so that it would be clear that he owed

[46] Uxtanēs, I. 17; Xorenacʻi, I. 14; Greenwood, *The Universal History,* p. 27. Up to the eleventh century (i.e. before Armenia was annexed by the empire), the old-fashioned word "Byzantium" was employed in the Armenian historiographical works, rather than "Constantinople." See Artjunova-Fidanyan, "L'image", p. 9.

[47] Uxtanēs, I. 46: "Եւ առնու զթագաւորութիւնն Խոսրով որդի նորին՝ յերրորդ ամի Ա֊րտաւանայ Պարսից արքայի. եւ նոյն հետայն միաբանեալ զզաւրս Հայոց՝ անցանէ ընդ լեառն մեծ՝ վրէժս պահանջելով զմահուան հաւր իւրոյ. եւ վանեալ հրով եւ սրով զաշխարհն զայն՝ առնու պատանդս եւ դառնայ. Եւ զիւրոյ տէրութեանն նշանակ արձան հաստատէ հելլենացի գրով՝ որպէսզի ընդ հնազանդութեամբ լինել Հայոց։"

his allegiance to the Romans (Hṙomayec'woc')."[48] Thus, while Xorenac'i's version describes Xosrow as working for the Romans and submitting local population to the imperial authority, Uxtanēs' version runs the other way and indicates that Xosrow subjugated the Caucasian nations "to the Armenians (Hayoc')." This change might have been because he wanted to deny that the Armenians had worked for the Romans authorities in Antiquity, or perhaps to assert his aspiration that the ideal leader of the Caucasian region was an Armenian king.[49]

All in all, although greatly depending of the text of Xorenac'i, Uxtanēs amended the narrative in several ways. The descriptions of the reigns of Aršam, Eruand, and Tiran are typical examples where he selected contents to underline the deeds of kings who had close engagement with Roman authority, usually with a negative impression. For the expedition of the king Xosrow to the north Caucasus, he made a more explicit change. Here the reign of Xosrow is not depicted in a negative manner, but perhaps this replacement is intended to rewrite the king's effort for the sake of Romans, which is not favourable from his viewpoint, in a more acceptable manner, giving him an agency and an independence of action which Xorenac'i's Xosrow did not possess. These changes may look trivial at the first glance, but it is highly probable that Uxtanēs made them intentionally and deliberately, allowing him to reflect his contemporary situation experiencing Roman-Armenian interaction in the form of the relationships between the imperial authority and church and the local Armenians in Sebasteia.[50]

[48] Xorenac'i, II. 65: "Եւ զիւրոյ տէրութեանն նշանակ՝ արծաթ հաստատէ հելլենացի գրով, որպէս զի յայտ լիցի ընդ հնազանդութեամբ լինել Հռոմայեցւոց:"

[49] Concerning this point, a letter of patriarch Nikolaos Mystikos preserved only in Armenian suggests that the Armenian patriarch should be the leader of the whole of the Caucasus. Yovhannēs Drasxanakertc'i, *Patmut'iwn hayoc'*, ed. Georg Ter-Vardanean, *Matenagirk' Hayoc'* 11-3 (Antelias 2010), LIII. In addition, a letter of Romanus I to an anonymous emir also shows a readiness to let all princes in the East, including Ašot II Erkat' and Gagik I Arcruni, to be under the authority of therecipient, who will be nominated "prince of princes (*išxan išxanac'*)." Theodore Daphnopatès, *Correspondence,* ed. Jean Darrouzès and Leendert G. Westerink (Paris 1978), no. 4. For the identification of the recipient, which remains uncertain, see Alexander A. Vasiliev, *Byzance et les Arabes,* French edition by Marius Canard, 3 vols (Brussels 1935–68), 2-1, pp. 425–427; Karen N. Yuzbašyan, *Armjanskoe gosudarstva epoxi Bagratidov i Vizantija, IX–XIvv* (Moscow 1988), pp. 268–275; Bernadette Martin-Hisard, "Constantinople et les *Archontes* du monde Caucasien dans *Le livre des cérémonies*, book 2, 48," *Travaux et Mémoires* 13 (2000), pp. 425–426. Another possibility is that Uxtanēs is reflecting David of Tao, a contemporary figure, who had broader territory including Armenian speaking areas.

[50] Noticeable omissions and changes can also be found in the letters from *Girk' T'ł't'oc'* utilised in the book II of Uxtanēs, but this should be treated in another place.

Local Religious Practice under the Byzantine Rule: Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia in the *History*

Uxtanēs' concern was not limited to the leading political figures. As noted by Greenwood and Peeters,[51] he also commented on the local religious situation; two chapters, 46 and 61, are respectively devoted to local saints, St Theodore (Teron),[52] and to the Forty Martyrs. These are also relevant when it comes to understanding the local tension at least between the imperial authority and church, and those who are in favour of them, and the Armenian communities who tried to retain their own faith. Of the two, it is the account of the Forty Martyrs which is particularly informative.

According to Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, Ephrem the Syrian, Anonymous Greek *Passio* and others, the Forty Martyrs were (at least partly) soldiers who were tortured to death in the reign of Licinius (r. 308–324, as *augustus*). The tradition relates that they were forced to stand naked in an icy lake, and thus frozen to die. Their bodies were burned into ashes and thrown into a river, but kept in one place by a miracle. A local bishop named Peter is said to have collected and returned them to the city. Their cult spread both to the East and the West, including Armenia, where a *Passio* close to the Greek version was composed.[53]

[51] Paul Peeters, "Sainte Šoušanik, martyre en Arméno-Géorgie (†12/14 décembre 482/482)," *Analecta Bollandiana* 53 (1935), p. 248; Greenwood, *The Universal History,* pp. 28–31.

[52] The version described by Uxtanēs is that of St Theodore the Teron (the "recruit"), who was martyred in the city of Amaseia, north-west of Sebasteia and later transferred to Euchaita which is usually commemorated as the centre of his cult. However, it is well known that by the time Uxtanēs was writing, the cult of another Theodore (the *stratelates*, the general) had emerged, and widely worshipped by the Anatolian military families. See John F. Haldon, *A Tale of Two Saints: The Martyrdoms and Miracles of Saints Theodore 'The Recruit' and 'The General'* (Liverpool 2016), pp. 1–12.

[53] Basil of Caesarea, *Homilia in quadraginta* martyres, *PG* 31, col. 508–540; English translation in "*Let us die that we may live*"*: Greek Homilies on Christian Martyrs from Asia Minor, Palestine and Syria, c. 350-450 AD*, Pauline Allen, Boudewijn Dehandschutter, Johan Leemans, and Wendy Mayer (London and New York 2003), pp. 67–77; Gregory of Nyssa, *Encomia in sanctos quadraginta martyres*, *PG* 46, col. 749–788; Ephrem the Syrian, *Encomium in sanctos quadraginta martyres*, ed. Assemani, τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἐφραὶμ τοῦ Σύρου τὰ εὑρισκόμενα πάντα, tome II (Rome 1743), 341–356; Greek *Passio*: Μαρτύριον τῶν ἁγίων μ' μαρτύρων ἐν Σεβαστείᾳ μαρτυρησάντων in *Acta martyrum selecta*, ed. Oscar von Gebhardt (Berlin 1901), pp. 171–181. It seems that the cult spread rapidly, as the accounts by Basil, Gregory and Ephrem all appeared within a century after their martyrdom. For summary, see *ODB*, s.v. Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia (by Alexander Každan and Nancy Patterson-Ševčenko). See also Pio Franchi de Cavalieri, "I santi quaranta martiri di Sebasteia,", *Studi e Testi* 49 (Rome 1928), pp. 155–184; Patricia Karlin-Hayter,

However, Uxtanēs obviously reflects the contemporary situation in the account of these saints. For instance, he explains that the emperor Licinius forbade Christianity and forced paganism, sending a certain centurion with the army "in the district of Kaputakēk'/Cappadocia, in the *t'emn*/թեմն of T'ewlaxunēk' and Anatawlikēk'/Anatolikon and Chartanayk'/Charsianon and Armeneakk'/Armeniakon and Dazimon" clearly reflecting the contemporary administrative arrangement of theme by the Byzantine authority in the tenth century.[54] Similar alteration can also be found in the account of St. Theodore, where his birthplace is mentioned as "the district of Armeniakon (*gawaṙn ayn Armeneak*/գաւառն այն Արմենեակ), which was called the Second Armenia."[55] The word *gawaṙ* is sometimes used as the translation for theme,[56] but usage of the word Armeniakon itself, which appears only after the middle-Byzantine period, is striking.[57] The similar usage of *gawaṙ* as a theme can also be found in book two of Uxtanēs. In his original part, Uxtanēs relates that Kiwrion, a sixth-century Georgian cleric whom Uxtanēs blames for the separation of Georgia and Armenia, is described as being brought up in the *gawaṙ* of Koloneia in the Roman empire. Koloneia was originally the name of city, not a district, and the military district of Koloneia came into being only after ninth century. Thus it seems also likely here that Uxtanēs alludes to the present situation in the same manner.[58]

Reflection of the contemporary administrative situation may not be limited to such obvious ones. In the account of the Forty, Uxtanēs narrates

"*Passio* of the XL Martyrs of Sebasteia, the Greek tradition: the Earliest Account (*BHG* 1201)", *Analecta Bollandiana* 109 (1991), pp. 249–304; Christopher Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition* (Aldershot 2003), pp. 170–176. Among them, Uxtanēs cites the Homily of Basil the Great.

[54] Uxtanēs, I. 61. 3; Greenwood, *The Universal History,* p. 29, n. 110. However, Datzimon (in the district of Sebasteia) and T'ewlaxunēk' (uncertain location) are not counted among themes in any Taktikons. See Oikonomidès, *Les listes*.

[55] Uxtanēs, I. 46; Greenwood, *The Universal History*, p. 28. In addition, an account from the Pseudo-Yovhan Mamikonean's *The History of Taron* also implies the thematisation taking place in Taron. See Greenwood, "Imagined Past," pp. 382–383.

[56] For example, in the colophon attached to the Adrianople Gospel, the writer mentions that it was written in the city of Adrianople in the *gawaṙ* of Macedonia. Adrianople is the capital of the Byzantine theme of Macedonia, although geographically belongs to Thracia. Mat'evosyan, no. 96.

[57] Uxtanēs, I. 46; Greenwood, *Universal History,* p. 28.

[58] See Uxtanēs, II. 1. Cf. Greenwood, *The Universal History,* p. 25. For Koloneia, see Anthony Bryer and David Winfield, *The Byzantine Monuments and Topography of the Pontos* (Washington D.C. 1985), pp. 145–151. Koloneia is referred to as being inhibited by Armenians in *De Thematibus*, II. 19. I would thank Dr Tim Greenwood for letting me know this. This may be relevant to the reference in the same treatise that it was formerly inhabited by Paulicians. See *De Thematibus*, IX.

that the officials who executed the imperial order to arrest and torture the Forty were called "*duk's*/դուքս" and "*datawor* (judge)/դատաւոր"[59]; Although the hearing from the *dux* and judge is also mentioned in the earlier versions, it is tempting to interpret them as allusions to the Byzantine administrative terms at that time, i.e. *doux* as the commander of larger territorial unit, and *krites*, thematic judge as a provincial administrator.[60] If so, this could also be an attestation of Uxtanēs' concern on the pressure from the imperial authority in his own time.

Besides the administrative matters, more importantly, Uxtanēs also projects the situation concerning the local religious community by emphasising a difference from the generally accepted account of the Forty Martyrs. In Uxtanēs' account, they were caught while taking refuge on the bank of the river Halys and then taken to the city of Sebasteia to be executed. Uxtanēs reveres this shelter on the riverbank as the site of commemoration, rather than their place of martyrdom in the city. The place they took refuge is called "a settlement named Vahan the Brave", which would clearly remind the readers of an Armenian association.[61] In addition to this change in interpretation, he proposes another date for the feast, 15th of the Armenian month of Arēg, which underlines the importance of the day they were taken out from the settlement, in supplementing the generally accepted date of 9th March.[62] As Greenwood suggests, the usual site for the pilgrimage may have been occupied by the Chalcedonians at the time, and thus Uxtanēs may have sought to find an alternative place of worship.[63] Since the Martyrs' relics were dispersed to many places, major cult centres for their veneration were also located outside of the Sebasteia, such as the martyrium in Caesarea in Cappadocia, as well as many Constantinopolitan churches, which might have been closed to the non-Chalcedonians, although there seems to have been a demand from the Armenians to make them otherwise, as discussed later.[64] There may have been a sanctuary in

[59] Uxtanēs, I. 61. 10.

[60] See Karlin-Hayter, "*Passio*", pp. 277–278.

[61] Uxtanēs, I. 61. 8.

[62] Uxtanēs, I. 61. 13. The thirteenth-century historian Vardan Arewelc'i remarks that the festival was established by Uxtanēs himself. See Robert T. Thomson, "The Historical Compilation of Vardan Arewelc'i", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 43 (1989), p. 132. Although Peeters ("Sainte Šoušanik," p. 248) assumes that Uxtanēs unsuccessfully tried to identify 15th of Areg with 9th March, these two dates are clearly distinguished in the text, as the "beginning (*skizbn*/սկիզբն)" and the "end (*katarumn*/ կատարումն)" of their martyrdom. Uxtanēs, I. 61, 14.

[63] Greenwood, *The Universal History*, p. 30.

[64] Walter, *Warrior Saints,* p. 172. See also n. 79 below.

the city of Sebasteia or in its vicinity as well, but considering the fact that the local Armenian religious community was persecuted and their own customs were prohibited by the Byzantine metropolitan of Sebasteia, it must have been hard for the Armenians to gain access to it.[65]

There is also another notable difference in Uxtanēs' account of the martyrdom. The Forty Martyrs are usually regarded as punished because of their refusal of the order of Licinius to desert the Christian belief and to offer sacrifice to pagan deities, and this is also included in Uxtanēs' narrative.[66] Unlike the other traditions, however, Uxtanēs also states that they were the soldiers who "did not become the executers of the impious order of Licinius, concerning the killing of the faithful and were not the participants of unworthy murders.[67]" The edict for pagan ritual and its refusal by Christians are also mentioned in Uxtanēs, but in his version the Forty seem to have been the soldiers, who at first came to punish the Christians.[68] The Forty then rejected the order and fled to the aforementioned hiding place, but were dragged out from there. Finally they were also asked to accept pagan deities, but declined and were put to death.[69] This may be a confusion of the account caused by Uxtanēs, who tried to assimilate the vernacular tradition with the other versions, but may also be interpreted as his own version to enable him to allude to the contemporary severance of the locals by the imperial authority and the church. During the above-mentioned persecution of Armenians in Sebasteia, the imperial army garrisoned there might have included those who were regarded as "Armenians" by the imperial authority and these soldiers might have supported or even participated in it. This could justify why Uxtanēs rendered this situation in the episode in this way. In referring to the soldiers' refusal to participate in the slaughter of Christians, Uxtanēs might have implicitly intended to criticise the contemporaries of doing the opposite, suggesting what truly

[65] See p. 175 above.

[66] Karlin-Hayter, "Passio", p. 249.

[67] Uxtanēs, I. 61. 8: "Իսկ սուրբ խառատուփն ո՛չ եղեն կատարիչք անաւրէնն հրամանացն Լիկիանէ առ ի սպանումն հաւատացելոցն, եւ ո՛չ հաղորդ անարժան սպանողացն…" The lack of their military character is also occasionally argued. There is even an argument that they were not soldiers at all, but it seems that at least some of them were soldiers. Karlin-Hayter argues that the Forty died as a result of a military punishment, rather a than persecution, which indicates that they were indeed soldiers, although their belonging to the *Legio* XII *Fulminata* might be a misinterpretation made by Gregory of Nyssa in the course of the tradition. See Karlin-Hayter, "Passio", pp. 274–275, 296–298.

[68] Uxtanēs, I. 61, 3–5.

[69] Uxtanēs, I. 61, 8–12.

faithful soldiers should have done. In the alternative he might have been commending Armenian soldiers who had refused to act.

It is also possible that the Armenians who were venerating the saints through their own tradition opposed the circulation of the imperial church's style of worship. Arguably the religious influence of Byzantium derived not only from the imperial church, but also from the military presence, as the Forty Martyrs were revered, at least partly, as military patrons.[70] An example relevant to the present study is the well-known painting of the Forty on the wall of the Cappadocian church at Çavuşin, in which they are dressed in armour. They are led by an Armenian general on horseback named Melias *Magistros*, marching alongside John *Magistros*, presumably the later emperor John Tzimiskes (r. 969–976).[71] Melias was an Armenian who served in the imperial army and finally promoted to *domestic of the schools*; his ancestor and namesake had also worked for the imperial authority in the early tenth century. This gives rise to the possibility that the Armenians could have had contact with the Byzantine style of cult of saints through their service in the Byzantine army. This may also have been the very situation which Uxtanēs had encountered in Sebasteia and was so concerned about, with Armenian soldiers serving in the imperial army and being introduced to non-Armenian traditions and rites, "misusing" the venerated local saint.

In a broader context, Armenians may also have been influenced through the utilisation of relics and cult of saints in the context of developing contacts between Byzantium and Armenia. From the ninth century onwards, relics were exploited in the course of the mutual approaches of Byzantium and the Armenians towards each other, probably because relics did not require complicated doctrinal debates. The number of episodes concerning the transfer of relics seems to have increased as the eastwards movement of the Byzantine Empire progressed.[72] One notable translation was that of a fragment of the Holy Cross to Vaspurakan at Easter 983, described in the *History of the Holy Cross of Aparank*' written by Grigor

[70] Walter, *Warrior Saints,* pp. 170–180.

[71] Lyn Rodley, "The Pigeon House Church, Çavuşin", *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik* 33 (1983), pp. 301–339; *ODB*, s.v. Çavuşin (by Annabel Jane Wharton).

[72] This might simply because of the increase of communications between the Byzantium and Armenians, but another reason might be the acquisition of new relics in the course of the Byzantine expansion to the east, as can be seen in the case of Mandylion of Edessa. See Paul Magdalino, "L'église du Phare et les reliques de la Passion à Constantinople, VII^{e}/VIII^{e} s.-XIII^{e} s.", *Byzance et les reliques du Christ*, ed. Jannic Durand and Bernard Flusin (Paris 2004), pp. 19–24.

Narekac'i.[73] It is evident that the True Cross had a special meaning as a symbol of loyalty to the emperor and orthodoxy, after its translation in the seventh century,[74] but relics of other saints were also brought from Constantinople to Armenia on this occasion. These included the relics of John the Baptist, Stephen the Protomartyr, James the brother of the Lord, Apostle Andrew, Cosmas and Damian, Abd-al-Mseh, Cyprian of Carthage, Justine, the priests of Łewondeank', as well as the Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia, implying that there was an enthusiasm for various kinds of saints.[75]

As has been pointed out by Sandrine Lerou and Sophia Mergiali-Sahas, such relics could have been exploited for both internal and external political purposes. They could be utilised for consolidating the legitimacy and enhancing the religious prestige of imperial authority, as well as influencing other Christian peoples and strengthening ties with them. A typical case of the latter usage in Armenia might be the above-mentioned translation of the True Cross, as well as the discovery of the relics of St Gregory the Illuminator and its translation to Armenia in the latter half of the ninth century,[76] but it must have also been applicable to the integration of "outsiders" within, such as the Armenians who immigrated to Byzantine territory or lived in an area newly annexed by the empire.[77] Introducing the Byzantine style of cults along with the relics might have

[73] Grigor Narekac'i, *Erkrord matean čaṙic', aškhatasirut'eamp,* ed. Gabriel Awtik'ean (Venice 1827); French translation by Jean-Pierre Mahé, "Grégoire de Narek, *Histoire de la Sainte Croix d' Aparank'*: traduction commentée," *Revue études arméniennes* 36 (2014–2015). See also Mahé, "Basil II et Byzance vus par Grigor Narekac'i", *Travaux et Mémoires* 11 (1991), pp. 555–573.

[74] Mahé, "Grégoire de Narek, *Histoire de la Sainte Croix d'Aparank'*", p. 82; Greenwood, "Imagined Past", p. 387.

[75] For the translation of the Holy Cross along with other relics of saints, see Grigor Narekac'i, *Erkrord matean,* ed. Awtik'ean, p. 23; trans. Mahé, pp. 114–116. See also Mahé, "Basil II", p. 570; Greenwood, "Imagined Past", p. 387. As for the Forty Martyrs, there is a well-known episode that their relics were discovered in Constantinople by Empress Pulcheria, reported by Sozomen, who was a contemporary witness of this event. See Sozomen, IX. 2. Although the dating of Uxtanēs' *History* matters, it is highly probable that the Forty Martyrs were among the saints for whose relics the Armenians had to approach the Byzantine empire. Narekac'i also wrote an ode and an exhortation to them. See *Trésor des Fêtes. Hymnes et Odes de Grégoire de Narek*, introduction, translation and notes by Jean-Pierre Mahé and Annie Mahé (Louvain 2014), pp. 95–98.

[76] Greenwood argues that this was promoted by Photius, in the course of the attempt to reconcile with the Armenian church. Tim Greenwood, "The Discovery of the Relics of St Grigor and the Development of Armenian Tradition in Ninth-Century Byzantium", *Byzantine Style, Religion and Civilization: In Honour of Sir Steven Runciman*, ed. Elizabeth M. Jeffreys (Cambridge 2006), pp. 177–191.

[77] Sophia Mergiali-Sahas, "Byzantine Emperors and Holy Relics: Use and Misuse of Sanctity and Authority", *Jarbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik* 51 (2001), p. 46; Sandrine Lerou, "L'usage des reliques du Christ par les empereurs aux XI^{e} et XII^{e} siècles:

been an effective way for expanding the religious influence of the empire. Relics could well have functioned as a kind of "soft power" for the imperial authority to attract the Christian population.[78]

However, because such practice implied the possibility of culminating in a more widespread acceptance of the Byzantine religious custom among Armenians, it must have been viewed unfavourably by conservative anti-Chalcedonians such as Uxtanēs. Thus, it is possible that Uxtanēs' emphasis on the Armenians' vernacular culture of faith derives from his wariness of Byzantine influence through the cult of the Forty Martyrs, and those who absorbed it.

Conclusion

When scrutinised in the context of the tenth-century, Uxtanēs' historical composition can be regarded as indicative of his concern for the Armenian community under his pastoral oversight, who were drawing closer politically and culturally to the Romans of Byzantium during the eastward extension of imperial authority. However, we should bear in mind that he was writing from the viewpoint of a strong defender of the non-Chalcedonian confession, and by no means representative of all Armenians. Indeed, Uxtanēs himself attests to the existence of other types of reactions to the empire, suggesting that there were other Armenians who were turning to the Romans, i.e. the Byzantine side. Therefore, his work can equally be understood as an indication of the fluctuating character of local Armenian communities situated inside the Byzantine empire, and their multiple responses to the attractions of Byzantine cult, liturgical practice and culture to which they were exposed.

Le Saint Bois et les Saintes Pierres", *Byzance et les reliques du Christ*, ed. Jannic Durand and Bernard Flusin (Paris 2004), p. 170.

[78] In the case of Armenians, it is clear from the Armenian texts that some of them were also enthusiastic to obtain relics and cult of saints from the empire themselves. Yovsep'ian, no. 51 = Mat'evosyan, no. 71 (An Armenian Priest Pantaleon visits Constantinople to gain relics of Peter and Paul, 965/6CE); Mat'evosyan, no. 86 (the Byzantine calendar of the feast of saints translated to Armenian, 991CE). They also played significant role in other Armenian historiographies. Cf. Pseudo Yovhan Mamikonean, *Patmut'iwn Tarawnwoy,* ed. Alek'san Hakobyan, *Matenagirk' Hayoc'* vol. 5 (Antelias 2005), pp. 1120–21; See also Greenwood, "Imagined Past", esp. pp. 384–389. Uxtanēs also cites this work.

Xorenac'i, II. 24	**Uxtanēs, I. 30**
Submission of Romans because of Small age	Submission to Romans
Internal Affairs (in detail)	Internal Affairs (briefly)

Table 1. The reign of Aršam (1st Century C.E.)

Xorenac'i, II. 36-46	**Uxtanēs, I. 41**
Confusion in the Reign of Eruand	–
Birth of Eruand	Birth of Eruand
Eruand's virtue in his youth	–
Massacre of the Sons of Sanatruc' and Survival of a Son	Massacre of the Sons of Sanatruk and Survival of a Son by God's will
Eruand's effort to seize the son	–
Submission to Roma and remain undisturbed, removal of Armenian authority, heavier burden, and installation of procurator	Submission to Rome
Construction deeds (Eruandashat, Bagaran, Eruandakert)	Construction of Eruandakert, and the episode on his evil eyes
Battle with young Artašes	–

Table 2. Reign of Eruand (1st Century C.E.)

Xorenac'i, II. 62	**Uxtanēs, I. 44**
His Faithful Service to the Romans	His Faithful Service to the Romans
His Life in Hunting and Amusement	His Life in Hunting and Amusement
On his Horse	–
Bestowment to the House of Aršak	–
On the Armenian Princes	–
Death in Snowy Winter	Death in Snowy Winter
Governed Peacefully	–
On Trdat Bagratuni	–

Table 3. The Reign of Tiran (r. 338–350)

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